

# manitobans FOR THE arts

ARTS•CULTURE•HERITAGE•CREATIVITY

## Pre-Budget Submission, October 13, 2016

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The arts, culture, heritage and creativity sector (referred to for ease in this document as the “cultural sector”) is an essential part of Manitoba’s economy. With a combined workforce of over 22,000 high quality jobs and provincial GDP of more than \$1.7 billion<sup>1</sup>, the cultural sector reaches into every corner of the province, and has a substantial impact on hundreds of thousands of citizens each year.

Provincial investment in a vibrant cultural sector is important to the social and economic prosperity of our province. It fosters a desirable environment for business development and community growth. A robust cultural sector raises Manitoba’s national and international profile and enhances the quality of life for Manitobans. It’s a sector that has a deep connection to our identity: our culture is who we are.

Culture permeates and enriches the lives of all Manitobans in every region of the province. Citizens of all ages engage in their own personal artistic pursuits through music, dance, theatre and visual art. Hundreds of thousands of Manitobans attend performances, festivals, museums, screenings, art galleries, concerts and displays of public art, with some of the highest rates of volunteerism and donations amongst Canadians.<sup>2</sup>

We welcome the opportunity to work with our new provincial government to achieve two important objectives: ensuring that all elected officials appreciate the essential leadership role government plays in preserving and enhancing the cultural legacy the citizens of Manitoba have created over generations; and understanding the important role government plays in fostering the vitality of the cultural sector as part of Manitoba’s diversified economy.

In this first year of the new government’s mandate, Manitobans for the Arts has three key requests for budget and planning consideration:

- 1. Strengthen the financial capacity and sustainability of cultural organizations with increased and significant investment in the cultural sector.**
- 2. Renovate and expand cultural infrastructure, with a new cultural capital fund to address the infrastructure deficit, and new investment for creative production and presentation spaces across the Province.**
- 3. Support the development of new Cultural Policy, and ensure that key recommendations are prioritized and resourced in future budget cycles.**

## **1. Strengthen the financial capacity and sustainability of cultural organizations with increased and significant investment in the cultural sector.**

Manitobans for the Arts recognizes and values the provincial government's long-standing investment in the cultural sector. While investment hasn't declined, it also hasn't grown. Statistics Canada data from 2009/10 ranks Manitoba fifth in per-capita provincial spending on culture.<sup>3</sup> Manitoba has not kept pace with other provincial jurisdictions in Canada; other provinces have strategically invested in the cultural sector to help grow their economies.

Manitoba's long-standing commitment to highly respected provincial agencies and partners, including the Manitoba Arts Council, the Arts Branch and Manitoba Film & Music, has fostered the diversity and breadth of today's cultural sector. Increased investment to these agencies and the Department of Sport, Culture, and Heritage will ensure that the cultural sector can build Manitoba's identity and reputation as a centre of artistic excellence. Maintaining and enhancing support to the cultural sector through other Departments such as Education and Training, and Growth, Entrepreneurship and Trade are also essential to ensure the support and promotion of the identity, creativity and well-being of Manitobans.

The financial ecology of the cultural sector in Manitoba is complex, and driven by diverse sources of revenue, in an increasingly competitive and crowded marketplace. Organizations across the Province rely on the stability of government investment – at the municipal, provincial and federal level – to help weather the evolving and unpredictable sources of earned and private sector support. Manitoba's non-profit cultural organizations are resourceful; since 2009, earned revenue has increased from 41% of total revenue to 47%, while public sector revenue has declined from 40% to 33%.<sup>4</sup> Each year that provincial government investment is flat-lined, Manitoba's cultural sector becomes less competitive, less stable and Manitoba's national brand is diminished.

Manitoba has enjoyed a national and international reputation as a cultural leader and the subsequent tourism brand linked to that reputation. Tourism marketing investment does not equate to cultural attraction investment – there is a need to invest in both marketing and the actual attractions. Investing in the cultural sector will help to build and maintain the world class cultural tourism destinations that are currently being marketed.

## **2. Renovate and expand cultural infrastructure, with a new cultural capital fund to address the infrastructure deficit, and new investment for creative production and presentation spaces.**

Ideas may not require bricks and mortar to take shape, but transforming creative ideas into physical form often requires external facilities. While Manitoba has numerous creative spaces, the demand is greater than the supply.

The provincial government also needs to address the infrastructure deficit affecting existing spaces and facilities. Across the province, culture is housed and created in provincial buildings, historical homes, museums, libraries and other community hubs. Past investments and our architectural history risk being lost without a commitment to maintain and enhance our cultural infrastructure. Facilities in all provincial communities need to be maintained, updated and renewed.

As our province's artists and creative practitioners innovate and grow, investment in infrastructure will ensure that Manitoba's cultural sector continues to make its mark nationally and internationally.

## **3. Support the development of new Cultural Policy, and ensure that key recommendations are prioritized and resourced in future budget cycles.**

The Manitoba Cultural Policy Review is underway, with the mandate to improve funding and sustainability of Manitoba's arts and culture sector. From the Free Press on August 13, 2016:

*Now, [Minister Rochelle] Squires said she is forming an advisory committee — she elicited volunteers through invitations to major organizations — to consider and review all aspects of funding and promoting culture in Manitoba. "The cultural economy is the fastest-growing sector of the economy. How are we going to grow the cultural economy?"<sup>5</sup>*

The Province of Manitoba last commissioned a Cultural Policy Review in 1990. The cultural sector and the province have changed dramatically in the intervening twenty-five years, from the explosion of the internet and digital technology to the increased diversity of Manitoba's population.

A well-defined cultural policy offers a framework for decision-making and the allocation of scarce resources in a rapidly changing economy, and informs the government's formulation of specific initiatives. A cultural policy should be a living document, reviewed and refreshed on a

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regular basis to ensure the policy is in tune with a rapidly evolving economy, and that the cultural sector is considered within the broader decision-making processes of government.

The Cultural Policy Review requires resources to ensure that a wide range of Manitobans can contribute to the conversation. Further, recommendations arising from new policy and review will require commitment and dedication. Policy development must not delay additional investment in the cultural sector, but can help frame future investments.

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## About Manitobans for the Arts

[www.manitobansforthearts.ca](http://www.manitobansforthearts.ca)

Manitobans for the Arts was created in 2012 to advance arts, culture, heritage and creativity in Manitoba. We are a non-partisan, volunteer and member-led group that places arts, culture, heritage and creativity at the centre of our province's prosperity and quality of life.

Our goals are to:

- Promote access to arts and culture for all Manitobans.
- Encourage participation and engagement in all aspects of the creative sector.
- Conduct research about the impact of arts, culture, heritage and creativity in the province.
- Share information among a diverse group of creative people working in the arts and cultural sector and with the community at large.
- Emphasize the role of arts and culture in Manitoba's well-being, growth and development.
- Identify gaps in service and promotion needs in the community.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, *Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, 2010-2014*

<sup>2</sup> *Volunteers and Donors in Arts and Culture Organizations in Canada in 2013*, Hill Strategies Research Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada, *Government Expenditures on Culture: Data Tables, 2009/2010*

<sup>4</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Overview of Revenue by Source and Province*, October 2014

<sup>5</sup> "Tories eye culture, sports boost", Nick Martin, WFP